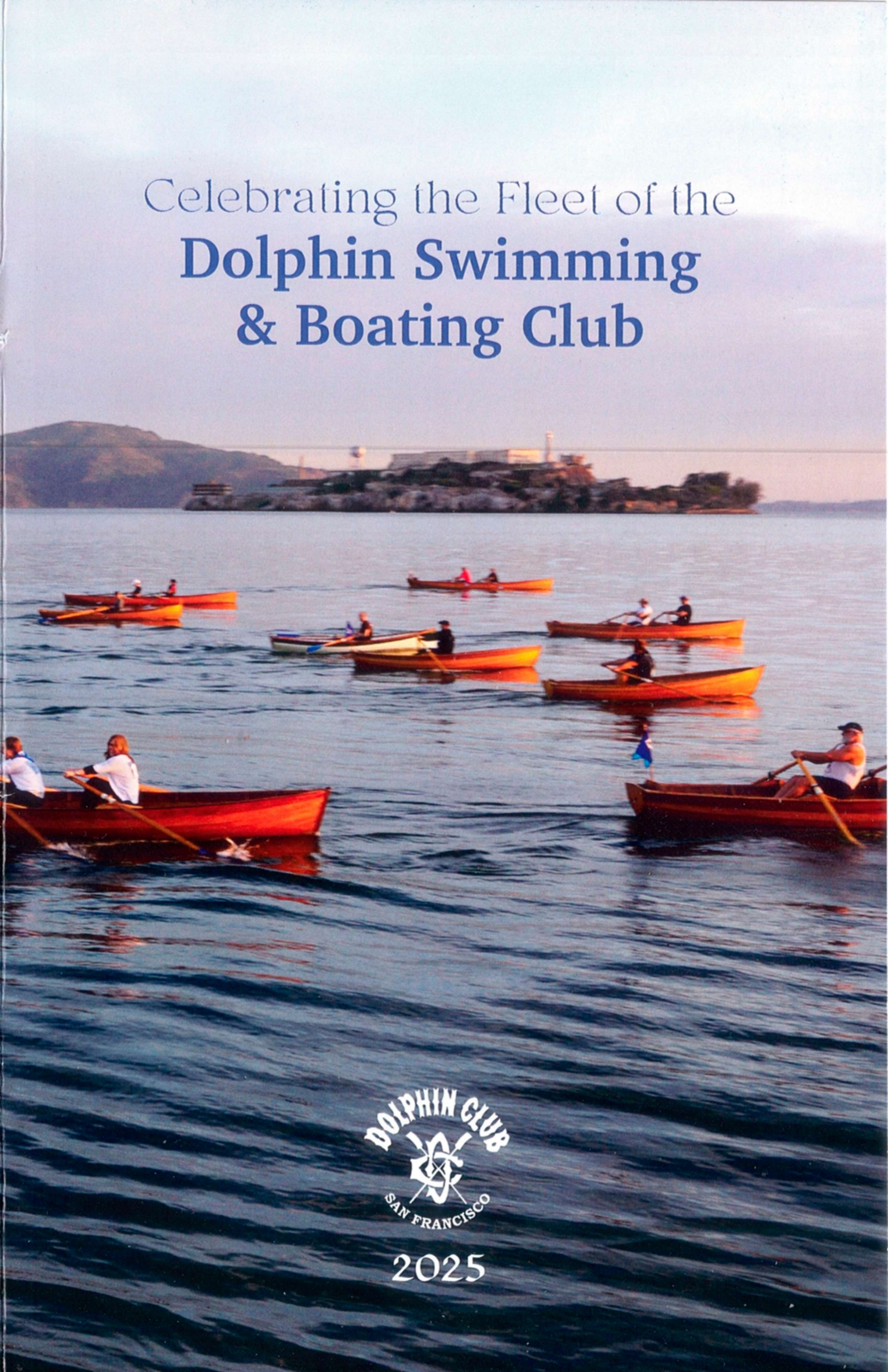
Celebrating the Fleet of the

Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club



DOLPHIN CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO

2025

With gratitude to our Boat Captains

Al de la Pena
Phil Kohlenberg
Renee de Cossio
Rachael Perry
Reuben Hechanova
Diane Walton
Jay Adams
John Blackman
JD Durst
Jay Dean
Jon Bielinski
James Dilworth
John Robiola
Maile Smith

and all who served as
Boathouse Captains
prior to 2004,

all of whose efforts contribute to the excellence celebrated here.

We love our boats.

© DOLPHIN SWIMMING & BOATING CLUB, 2025. PAGES 2–3 BACKGROUND IMAGES | JEANETTE YU

From early San Francisco entrepreneurs racing to serve incoming ships, to supporting Dolphin open water swims, to today's athletes racing against one another amongst the pleasure and fitness seekers, rowing on San Francisco Bay has a rich history. Captured here are the Dolphin Club rowboats and other water craft that reflect that rich past and present of rowing on San Francisco Bay.

Whether over 100 years old, or more recently commissioned, these boats go out from the Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club, in Aquatic Park, the heart of San Francisco's Maritime Park, daily. Also included are some clues to how and where we are able to do that, and places you can go for more information.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents sorts the Dolphin Club traditional fleet into distinct hull types, year built, and, where applicable, by the Library of Congress HAER file number. The following pages provide additional information, and show the boats in action, some parts of the boats, and some drawings.

Barge 6

Six-Sweep Oared Pleasure Barge
HAER CA-2360
1887. JOHN WIELAND

Doubles 10

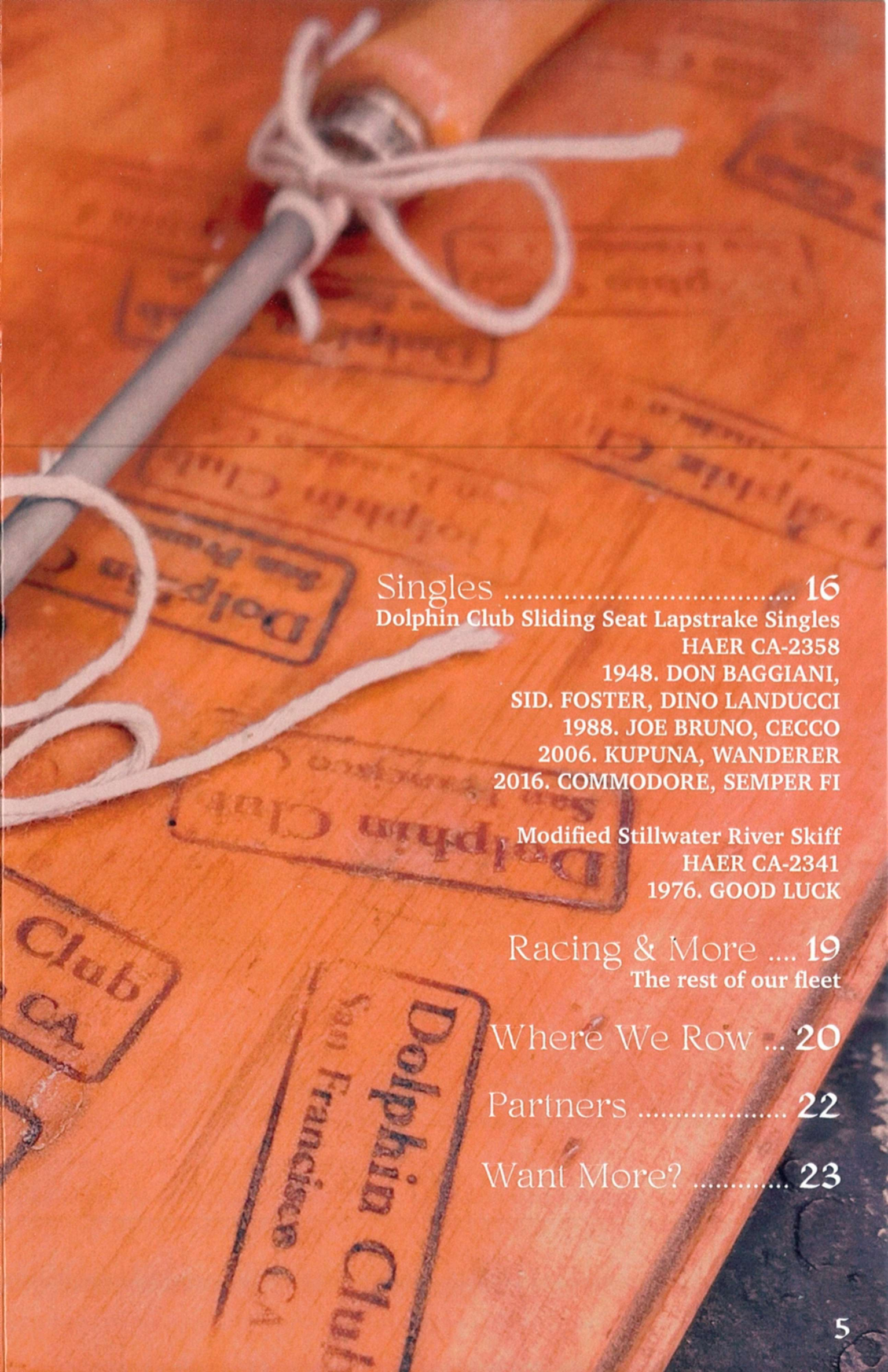
Dolphin Club Sliding Seat Lapstrake Doubles
HAER CA-2359
1917. CHAS. M. FARRELL
HAER CA-2376
1938. LAWTON C. HUGHES, JAMES J. CRONIN

Cable Car Gigs 14

Sliding Seat Lapstrake Doubles
HAER-CA-2388
ca. 1900. VIKING
1985. LIFTHRASIR

Sliding Seat Lapstrake Single
2010. KOHLENBERG

BACKGROUND IMAGE | JEANETTE YU



Singles 16
Dolphin Club Sliding Seat Lapstrake Singles
HAER CA-2358
1948. DON BAGGIANI,
SID. FOSTER, DINO LANDUCCI
1988. JOE BRUNO, CECCO
2006. KUPUNA, WANDERER
2016. COMMODORE, SEMPER FI

Modified Stillwater River Skiff
HAER CA-2341
1976. GOOD LUCK

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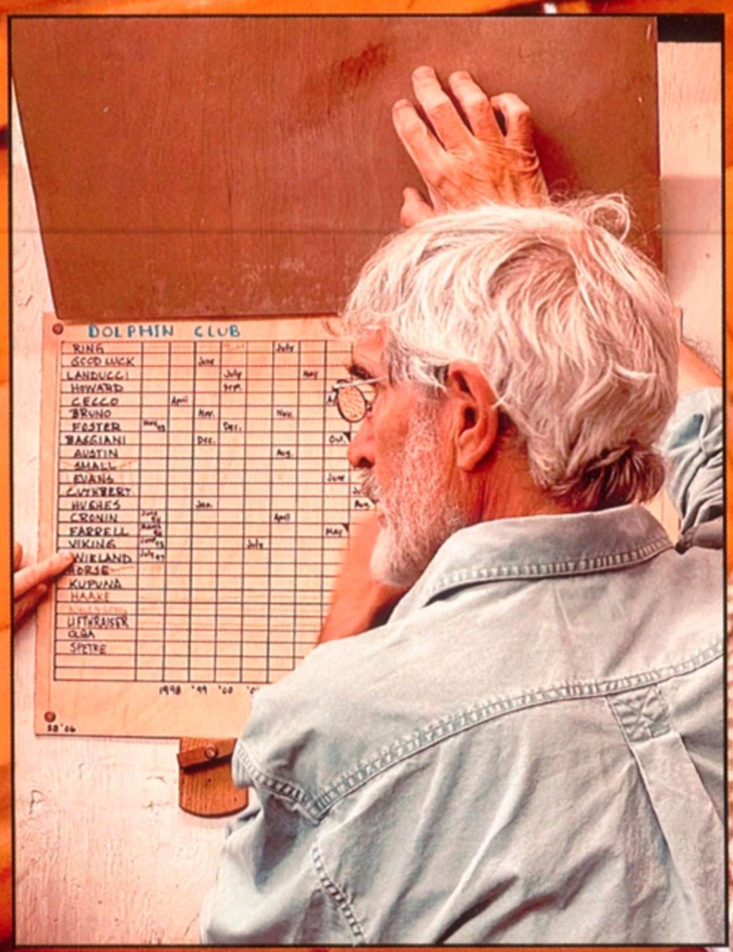
Barge

Following the death of Dolphin Club founder John Wieland in 1885, his family commissioned the barge and gave it to the Dolphin Club. This wooden boat JOHN WIELAND, is a Six-Sweep Oared, Sliding-Seat Lapstrake Barge, and is now used for recreation and competition on SF Bay. The most recent major rebuild was from 1991 to 1997, by Jon Bielinski and many volunteers using the Dolphin Club boat shop.



John Wieland & Valentine Kehrlein, Sr., immigrants from Germany, establish the Dolphin Swimming & Boating Club in July 1877, with 25 charter members.

Dolphin Club rowers' first victory at a Pacific Amateur Rowing Association regatta.

The club christens the JOHN WIELAND.

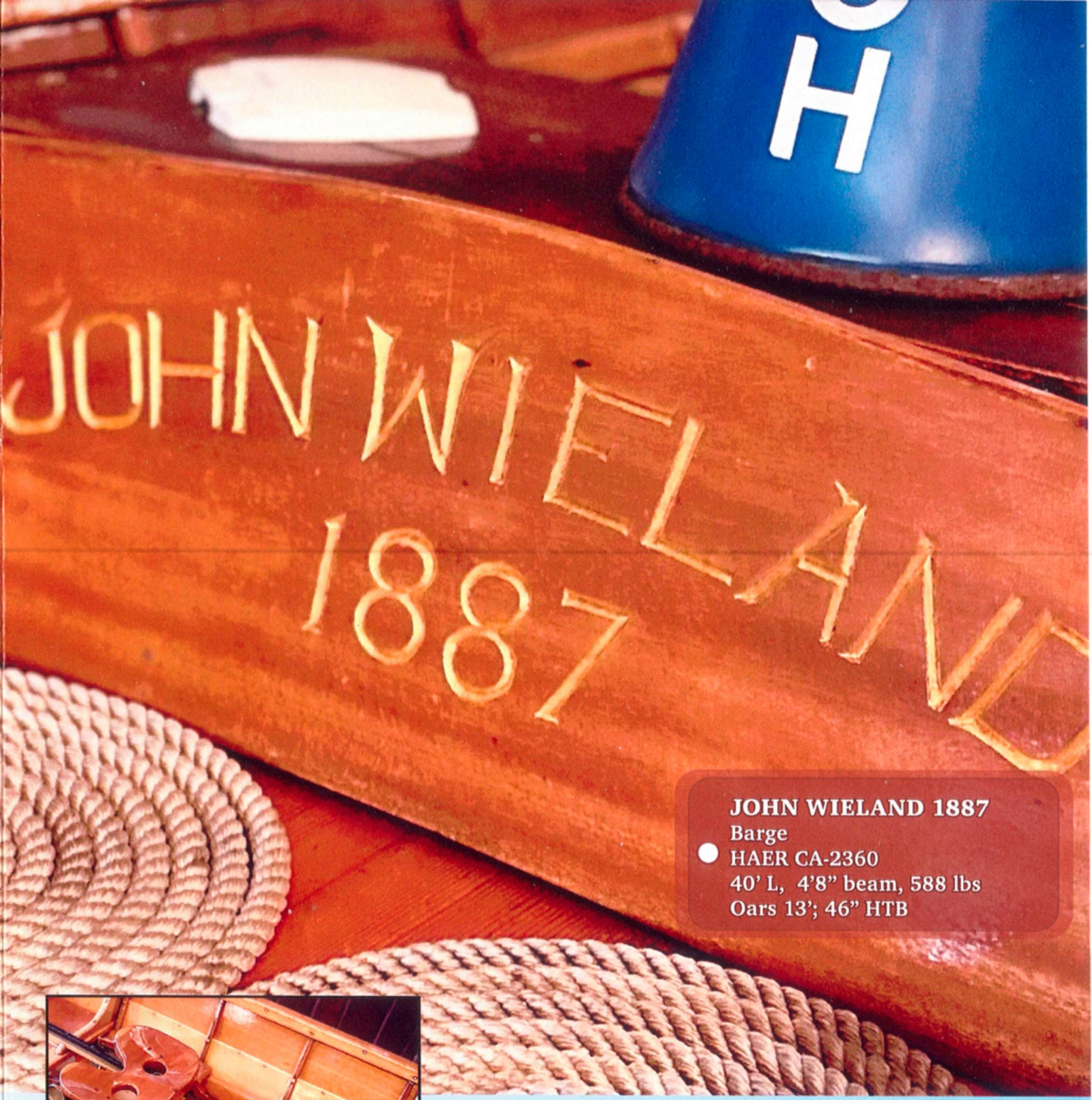
25 members

1877

1879

1887

BACKGROUND IMAGE | JEANETTE YU



JOHN WIELAND 1887
Barge
HAER CA-2360
40' L, 4'8" beam, 588 lbs
Oars 13'; 46" HTB

Dolphin oarsman Alex Pape, undefeated in his first three years of racing shells, becomes the Pacific Coast Champion.

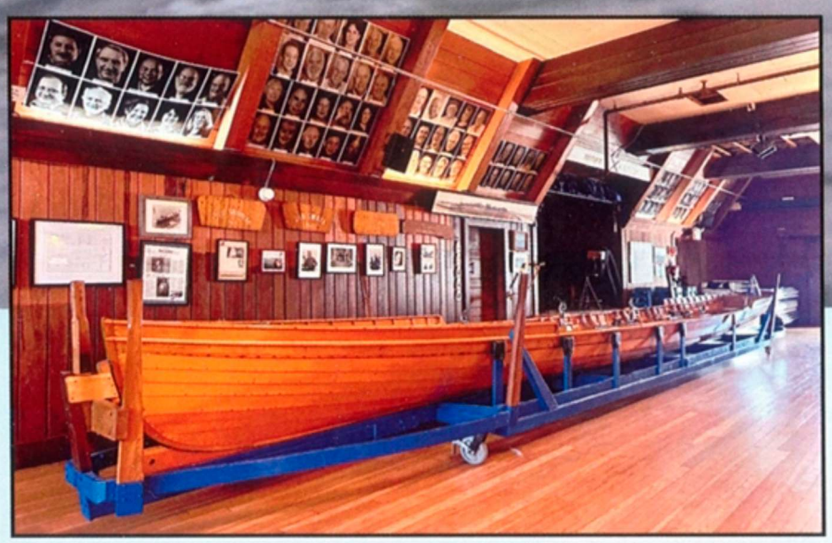
The Dolphin Board approves the addition of a handball court.

50 members 1900

125 members 1911

"The Wieland is my favorite boat. The heft of it, & the camaraderie of the team, six women & our cox, surrounded by the beauty & challenges of the Bay, make for an unbeatable day. And winning races is pretty good, too!"

—KELLEY HEYE, Dolphin



CHAS M FARRELL

The California State Assembly approves the concept for Aquatic Park. Dolphin Charles M. Farrell is a force behind the project.

1915

1917

BACKGROUND IMAGE | SUSANNE FRIEDRICH

The Dolphin Club holds its first club swim across the Golden Gate, supported by rowing pilots (see photo on page 3), the first by any organization. 23 men finish.

Lawton Hughes becomes a Pacific Coast sculling champion & coach for many later Dolphin crews.

Les Hendry rows by himself from the Dolphin Club to Stockton.

1917

1924

260 members

50th Anniversary!

1927

Doubles

The Dolphin Club has three sliding seat lapstrake doubles, one built in 1917 and the other two in 1938. In recent years they have been in the water about 150 days a year, in regattas, for groups rows, and for pleasure. Members of the Club have regularly made the 100-mile upriver row to Sacramento in these boats since 1956.

First Training Quarters for competitive rowers at Pier 54 in the China Basin area. Tom Troneum wins the Pacific Coast Singles Rowing Championship & continues winning major races through 1940.

1935

Clubhouse moved to current location.

1937

JAMES J CRONIN
&
LAWTON HUGHES

1938

Aquatic Park is dedicated & opened to the public.

1939

BACKGROUND DRAWING | JULIA HECHANOVA

CHAS M. FARRELL 1917
Dolphin Club Rowboat–Double
HAER CA-2359
18' L, 53" beam, 350 lbs
Oars 9'; 27-1/2" HTB

LAWTON HUGHES 1938
Dolphin Club Rowboat–Doubles
HAER CA-2376
18' L, 55" beam, 376 lbs
Oars 9'; 26" HTB

JAMES CRONIN 1938
Dolphin Club Rowboat–Double
HAER CA-2376
18' L, 55" beam, 376 lbs
Oars 9'; 26" HTB

"Hard to imagine that the Lawton Hughes was built in 1938. The trees that were cut down to build the Hughes have already regrown larger and thicker than before... These boats are a renewable resource in the real sense of the word. In our throw-away culture, it's nice to care for something that will most certainly outlive me!!"

—NEAL MULLER, Dolphin

1946 — The Board of Governors approve converting handball court "B" into a workshop to maintain the wooden boats.

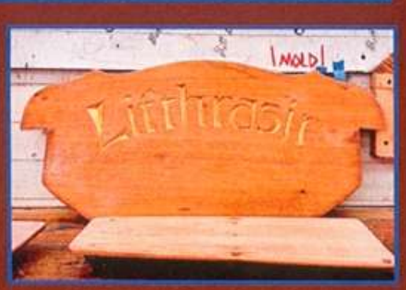
1948 — BAGGIANI, LANDUCCI, & FOSTER added to fleet.

1951 — The City offers Lake Merced as a replacement for Pier 54 Training Quarters, Club agrees. Satisfactory facilities are later dedicated at the Lake.

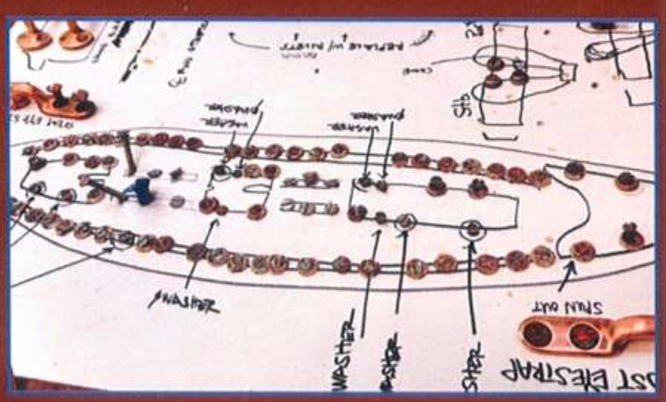
1956 — First team row to Sacramento. Ed de Cossio, Sr. with various partners will do it for 20 consecutive years.

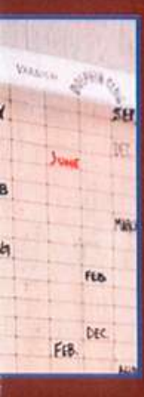
Boat Shop

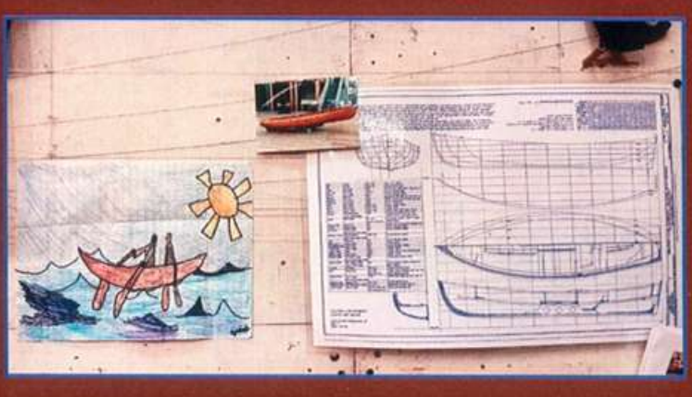
Maintaining the fleet is an ongoing responsibility; all are welcome to Tuesday Boat Shop sessions to work on the fleet under the guidance of our professional boat builders. The Club goals of promoting ongoing on-site maintenance of the fleet, building new boats, and fostering member and community connection to the traditions of our city and our bay through our historical wooden vessels are alive and well in the Boat Shop.



BACKGROUND IMAGE | JEANETTE YU



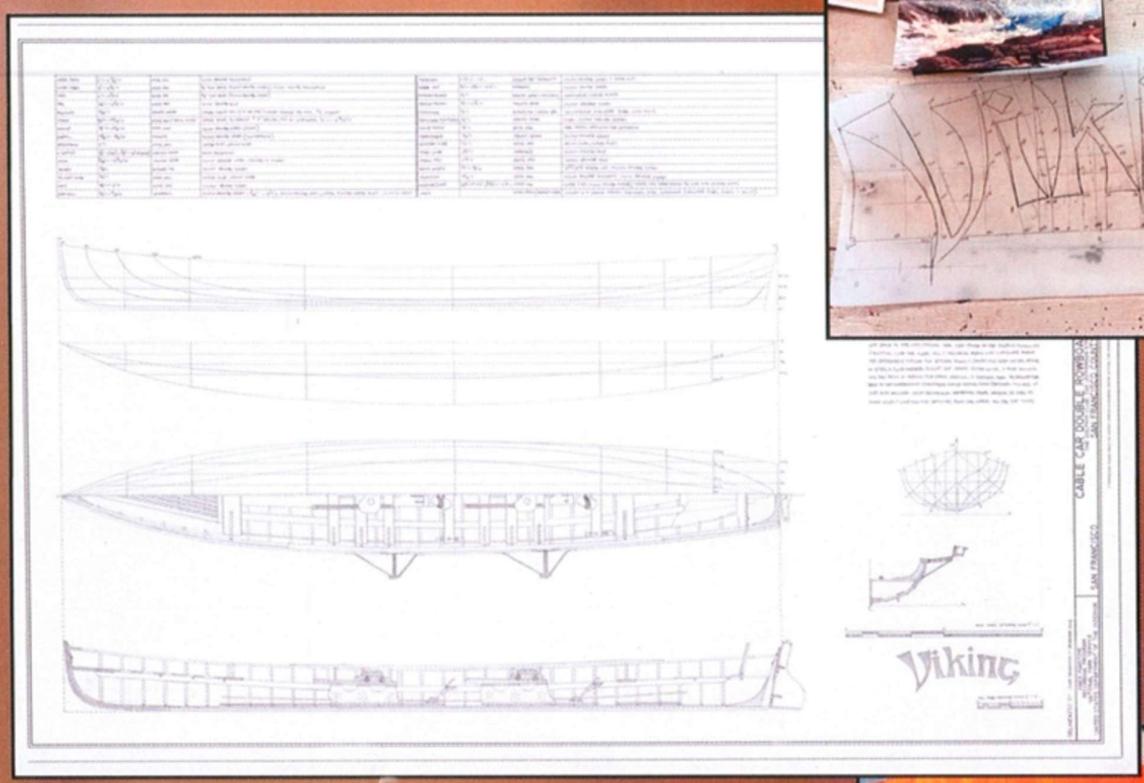


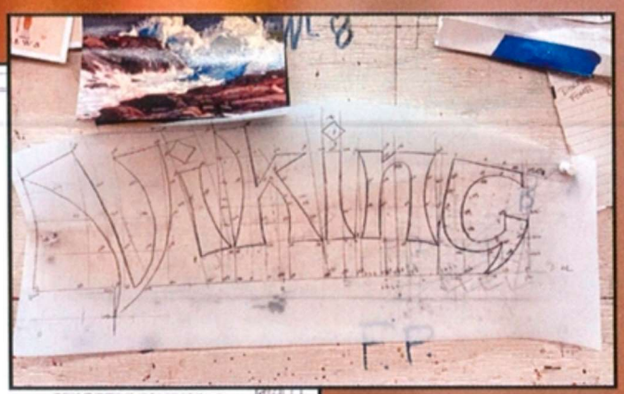


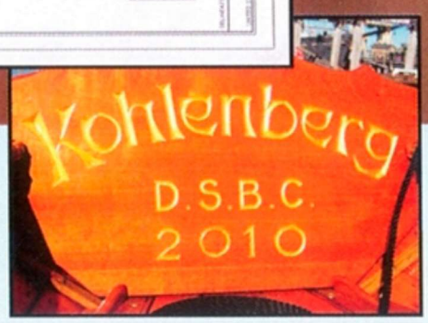
cecco

Cable Car Gigs

Built by carpenters in the San Francisco Cable Car barn, the VIKING, a double, was donated to the club in 1943 and restored in 1984 by Jeremy Fisher-Smith. The LIFTHRASIR, another Viking class double, was built by Fisher-Smith in the 1980s and relaunched in 2012. He also built the Club's sole Cable Car Gig Sliding Seat Lapstrake Single, the outcome of a campaign led by Todd Oppenheimer to create a memorial for Phil Kohlenberg. With its racing shell geometry and competitive edge, the VIKING inspired SERC to commission construction of their VALHALLA, and now each Club has two doubles and a single in this class.







The Dolphin Club holds its first Alcatraz swim, to become an annual event.

James Storm takes silver in Double Sculls at the Tokyo Olympics.

GOOD LUCK

300 members

1958

1960

1964

1976

BACKGROUND IMAGE | JEANETTE YU

VIKING 1900
Cable Car Gig Double
HAER CA-2388
22' L, 53" beam, 270 lbs
Oars 124"; 33" HTB

LIFTHRASIR 1985
Cable Car Gig Double
HAER CA-2388
22' L, 53" beam, 270 lbs
Oars 124"; 33" HTB

KOHLENBERG 2010
Cable Car Gig Single
HAER CA-2388
18' L, 37" beam, 189 lbs
Oars 118"; 33" HTB

"Even though members join for many reasons & quite a few are more interested in swimming than in rowing, the boats remain the core of the club's identity and their care is a source of pride. When you walk in either of the clubs, the wooden boats hold the stage, & the Vikings steal the show."

—*WOODENBOAT* MAGAZINE, JUNE 2011

1976

360 members

As the outcome of successful litigation by 6 women, the rowing clubs begin accepting female members. 5 women join the Dolphin Club in Oct 1976, & 50 join the next year.

1977

100th Anniversary!

1981

The Dolphin Club stages the first annual Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon on July 11, 1981.

1984

Relaunch of LANDUCCI (1948)

1985

LIFTHRASIR

1988

JOE BRUNO & CECCO

Relaunch of FARRELL (1917)

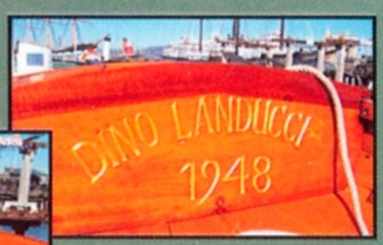
Singles

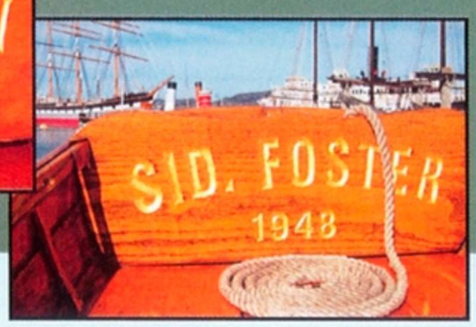
The Dolphin Club wooden single fleet, works of art and sport, was initiated by the "three sisters" (Bill Richards' BAGGIANI, FOSTER, and LANDUCCI) in 1948. The newest in the fleet, built on the same pattern, are the 2006 KUPUNA and 2016 COMMODORE and SEMPER FI, built by our Club boat builders. with volunteer help and member support. The COMMODORE was built at Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding. They are built for this bay, and they are out on it regularly, with members learning to row on several of them, and gradually gaining access to the whole fleet.

SID.FOSTER 1948
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 48" beam, 198 lbs
Oars 8-1/2'; 25" HTB

DON BAGGIANI 1948
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 48-1/2" beam, 207 lbs
Oars 8-1/2'; 25" HTB

DINO LANDUCCI 1948
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 48-1/2" beam, 209 lbs
Oars 8'; 22" HTB





Relaunch of HUGHES (1938)

Relaunch of CRONIN (1938)

Fully refurbished to new condition, the JOHN WIELAND (1887) is relaunched at a large & joyous celebration.

Dolphin Sebastian Bea & rowing partner Ted Murphy win Silver at the Sydney Olympic Games in the coxless pair event.

825 members 1990 1991 1997 900 members 2000

BACKGROUND IMAGE | DIANE WALTON

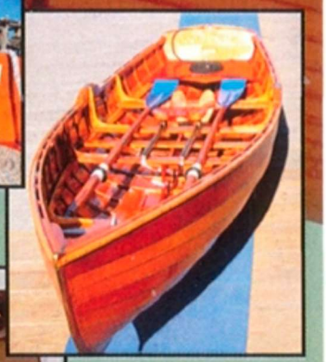
JOE BRUNO, CECCO 1988
Dolphin Club Singles
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 47" beam, 212 lbs
Oars 124"; 33" HTB

KUPUNA 2006
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 48-1/2" beam, 167 lbs
Oars 8'; 24-1/2" HTB

COMMODORE 2016
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 47-1/2" beam, 170 lbs
Oars 8'; 23" HTB

SEMPER FI 2016
Dolphin Club Single
HAER CA-2358
14' L, 47-1/2" beam, 165 lbs
Oars 8'; 23" HTB

"There is nothing
-absolutely nothing-
half so much
worth doing as simply
messing about in boats."
—KENNETH GRAHAME



Dolphin Renee de Cossio rows single-handedly the 90 nautical miles from the Club to Sacramento, the first known woman to accomplish this long upriver pull.

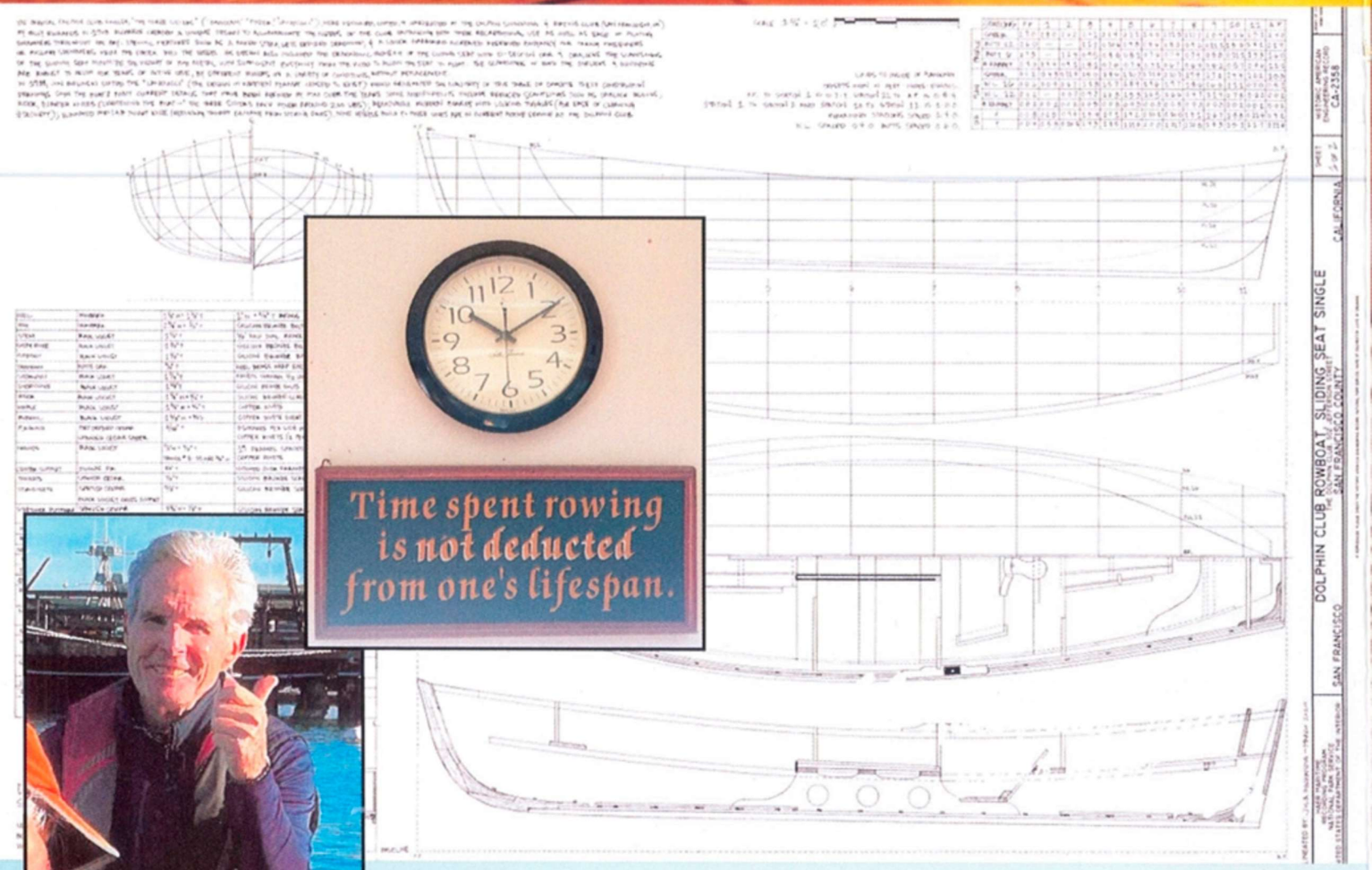
KUPUNA
&
WANDERER

1152 members

2005

2006

2006



GOOD LUCK 1976
Stillwater Riverboat
HAER CA-2341
15'5" L, 47" beam, 187 lbs
Oars 8-1/2'; 22" HTB 27"

Other single rowboats in the boathouse include the AUSTIN, RING, & SPECTRE.

"... Row me together
Row me in good spirits
And I will carry you across the water."
—JAMES STORM

KOHLENBERG

1237 members

2010 2010

BACKGROUND DRAWING | JULIA HECHANOVA

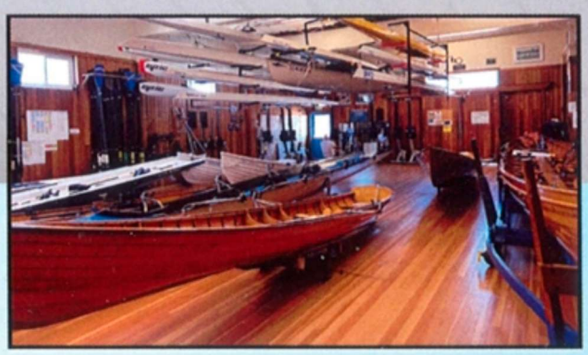
Racing & More

Early racing days on the Bay saw crowds of thousands enjoy the barge and scull competitions, with up to 30 racing clubs on the water in the late 1800s. The Dolphin Club and South End Rowing Club are bringing it back with more! The Dolphin Club is home to a plethora of watercraft, including 5 shells, 5 Coastals, 18 kayaks, 5 surfskis, and 12 standup paddleboards. The newest acquisition is a Coastal double; the newest quad is named for Olympian Jim Storm, Rowing Commissioner at the Lake Merced Tom T roneum boathouse, where we house 6 Club shells and 20 members' shells.

JAMES STORM

"On the new blue quad, five people can adventure. Nowhere is too far."
—ALLY SILLINS, Dolphin

Racheal Perry & Kelly Amdur win their 2X rowing race in the elite Head of the Charles Regatta in Cambridge, MA.



COMMODORE
&
SEMPER FI

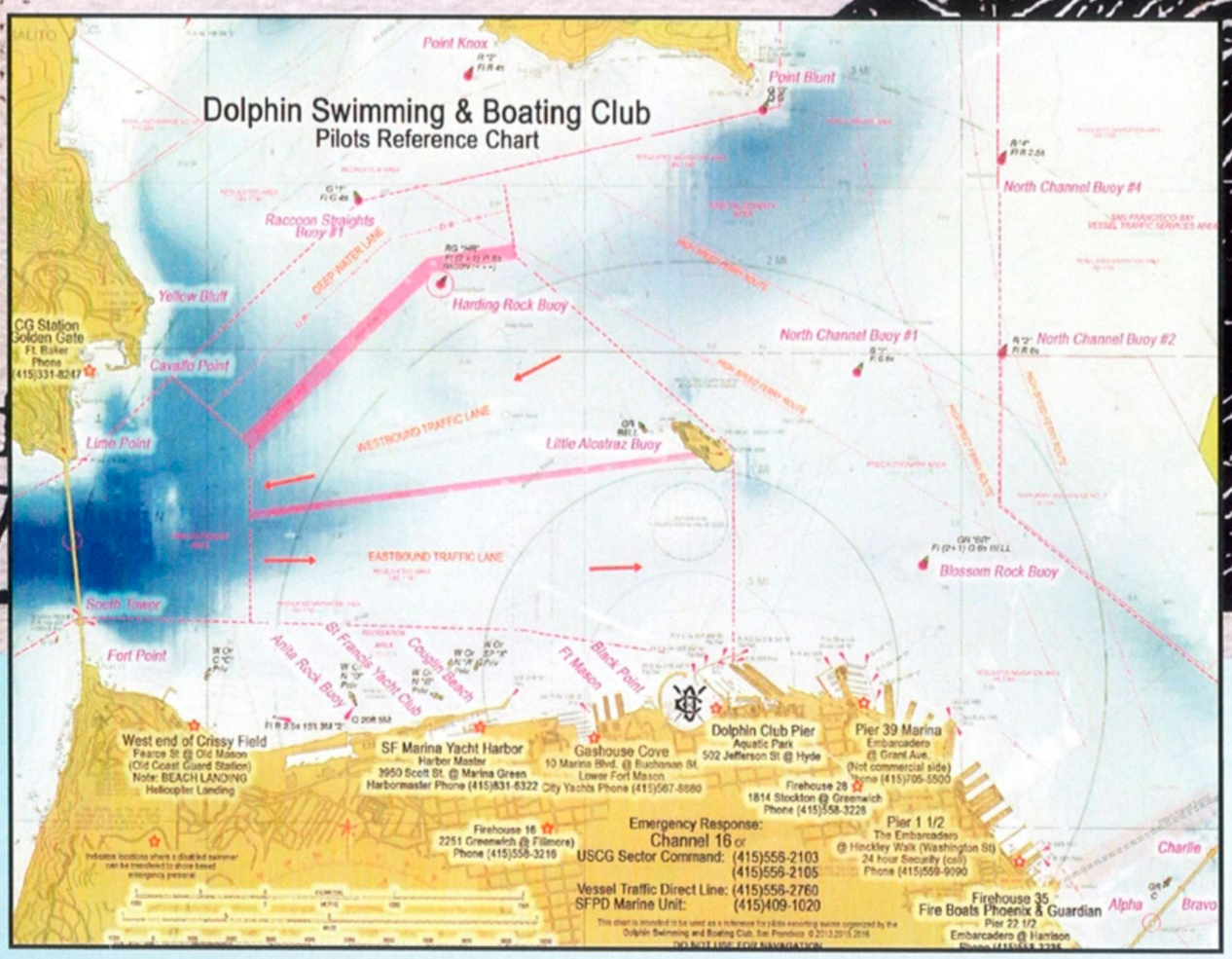
2016 2016 2016

1546 members

BACKGROUND IMAGE | DIANE WALTON

Where We Row

After in-house training, practice, and competency testing, Dolphins are free to row inside the Bay. The training is required for even the most expert rowers, as launch and recovery, as well as time on the Bay, are very different than ordinary rowing sites. The first rows are usually out against the current, and then current-aided coming home. Many rowers pilot our scheduled swims and the pilot reference chart below identifies key landmarks and bay information that all rowers piloting swims need to know.



2080 members

2023

BACKGROUND IMAGE | JEANETTE YU

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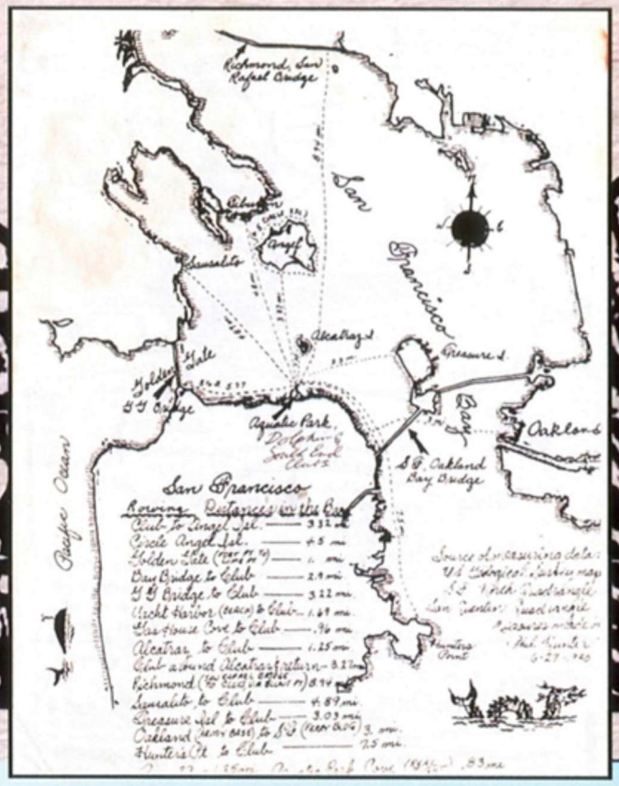
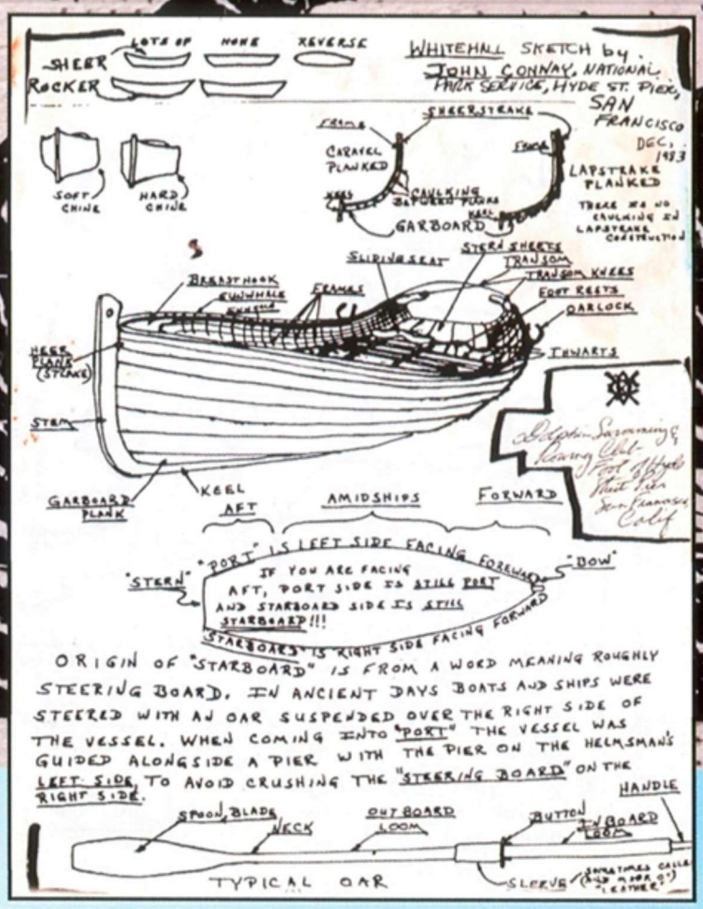
6.9
(11


San Francisco
Oakland
Alameda
Richmond, San Rafael Bridge
S.F. Oakland Bay Bridge
Golden Gate Bridge
Aquatic Park
Alcatraz
Treasure I.
Yerba Buena I.
Hunters Point
Bay
Ocean
San Francisco Rowing Distances on the Bay
Circle to Angel Isl. — 3.12 mi
Circle Angel Isl. — 4.5 mi
Golden Gate (near ctr of) — 6 mi
Bay Bridge to Club — 2.9 mi
S.F. Bridge to Club — 3.22 mi
Yacht Harbor (Marina) to Club — 1.69 mi
Clubhouse Cove to Club — .96 mi
Alcatraz to Club — 1.25 mi
Club around Alcatraz return — 3.2 mi
Richmond (to Yacht Harbor) 8.94 mi
Aquatic to Club — 1.89 mi
Treasure Isl to Club — 3.03 mi
Oakland (near Bridge) to S.F. (near Bridge) 3 mi
Frontier Pt to Club — 2.5 mi
Source of measuring data: U.S. Geological Survey map
S.F. Yacht Quadrangle
San Francisco Quadrangle
Measured under the direction of Paul Kuntz
6-27-49

The above map, hand-drawn, shows options for pleasure distance rows.



The above illustration identifies the parts of the boat, just some of the knowledge to be gained in the Club training.

2150 members

2025

150th Anniversary!

2027

Partners

PARTNERS IN PRESERVING & ENLIVENING OUR MARITIME HERITAGE:
Arques School of Wooden Boatbuilding
www.arqueschl.org

Library of Congress
The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) was founded in 1969 to record America's engineering and industrial heritage. The Dolphin Club fleet documentation is on file with them.

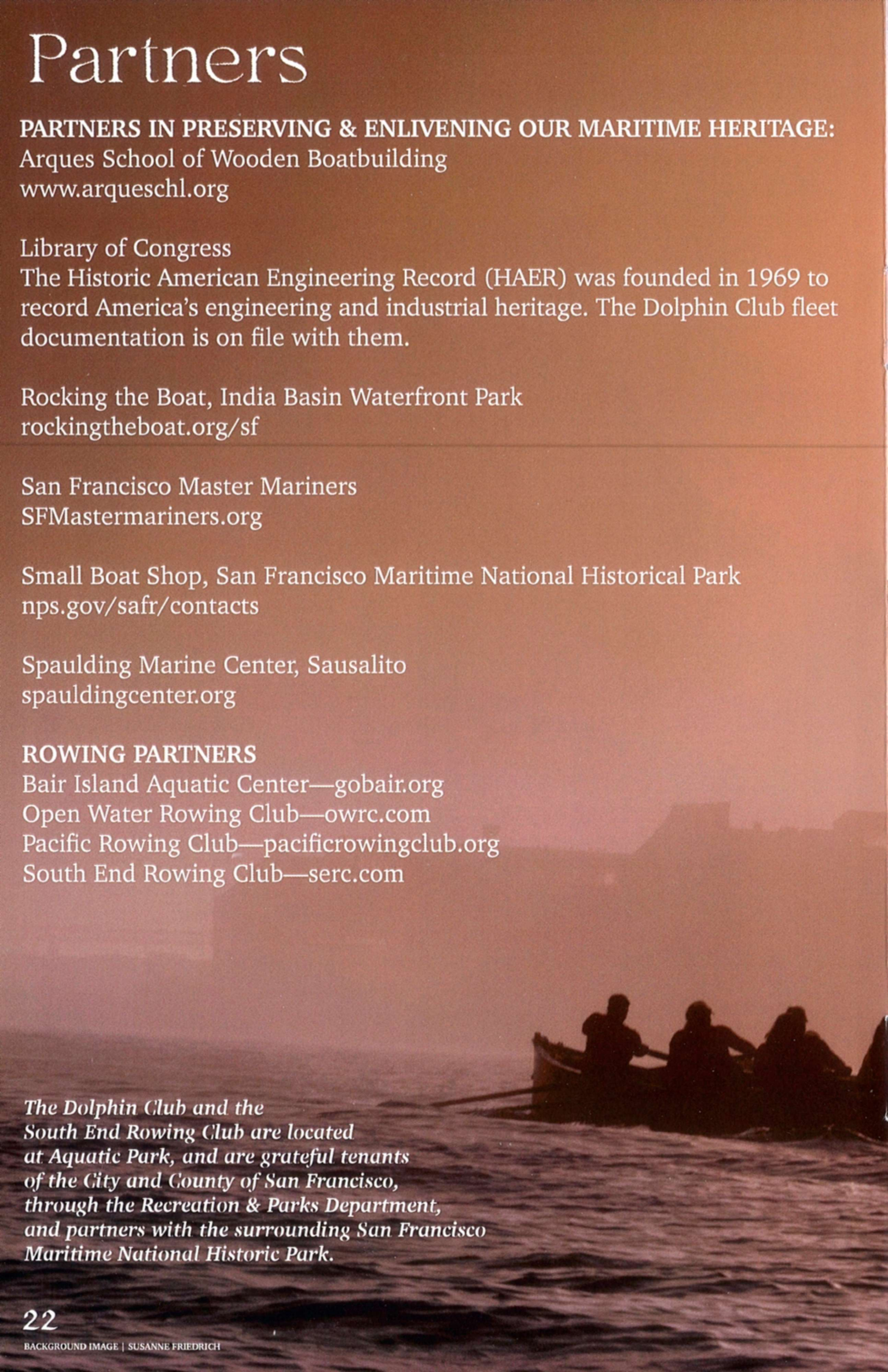
Rocking the Boat, India Basin Waterfront Park
rockingtheboat.org/sf

San Francisco Master Mariners
SFMastermariners.org

Small Boat Shop, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
nps.gov/safr/contacts

Spaulding Marine Center, Sausalito
spauldingcenter.org

ROWING PARTNERS
Bair Island Aquatic Center—gobair.org
Open Water Rowing Club—owrc.com
Pacific Rowing Club—pacificrowingclub.org
South End Rowing Club—serc.com



The Dolphin Club and the South End Rowing Club are located at Aquatic Park, and are grateful tenants of the City and County of San Francisco, through the Recreation & Parks Department, and partners with the surrounding San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park.

BACKGROUND IMAGE | SUSANNE FRIEDRICH

Want More?

THE DOLPHIN CLUB WEBSITE (dolphinclub.org/boating)
Filled with information on rowing and sculling, and the Dolphin Club fleet. For more on history of the Dolphin Club go to the "About" dropdown at **dolphinclub.org**.

***THE DOLPHIN LOG* (archive.org)**
The Dolphin Log, the Club's magazine, has many stories on our fleet. One story is "Jeremy Fisher-Smith; Keeper of the Viking Flame," by Todd Oppenheimer, Fall 2007, pages 6–7. Logs back to 1949 are on **archive.org**.

DOLPHIN CLUB ARCHIVES
hub.catalogit.app/375

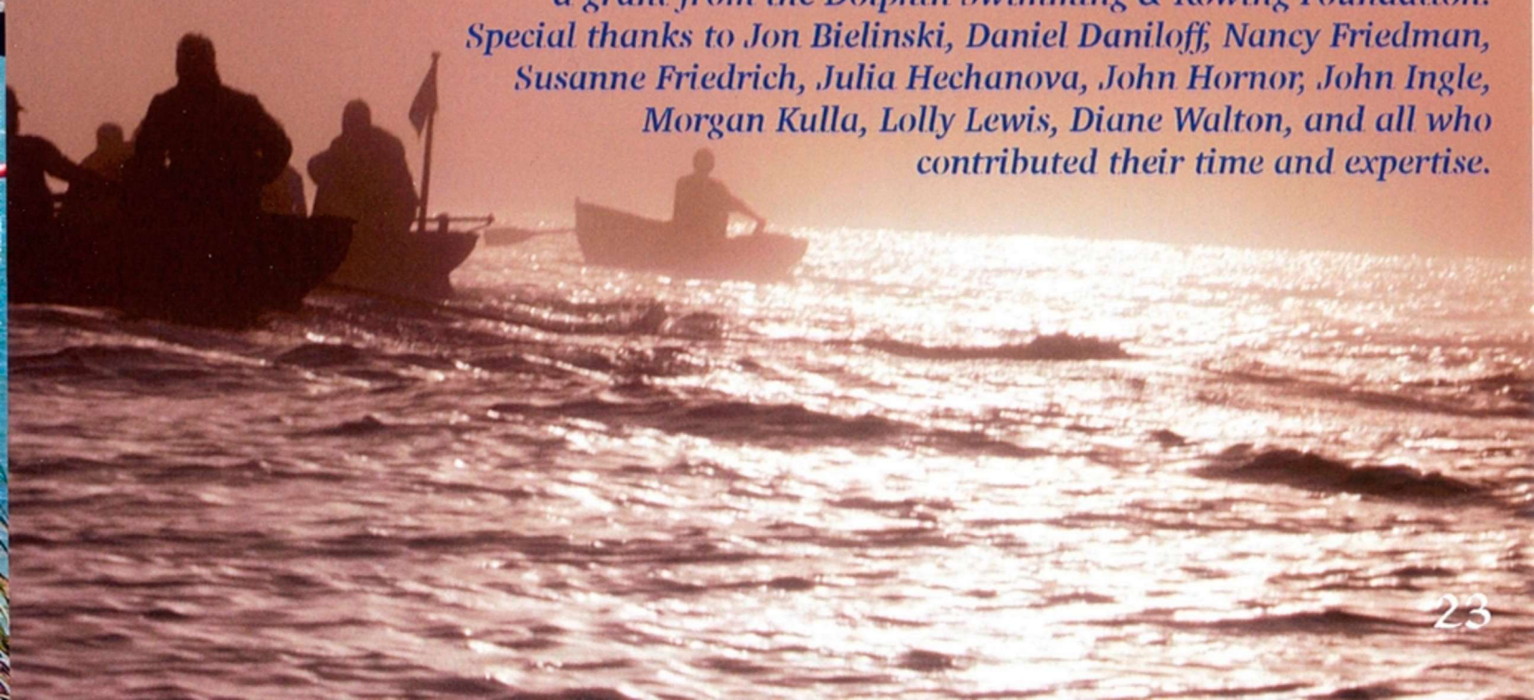
***WOODENBOAT* MAGAZINE**
"San Francisco's Oldest Rowing Clubs," by Jon Bielinski, 1981, pages 46–49.

SOUTH END: SPORT AND COMMUNITY AT THE DOCK OF THE BAY
by Robert Barde with Patrick Cuneen, 2019.

THE ROWING CLUBS OF CALIFORNIA, 1851–1933
by Bill Pickelhaupt, 2016.

Between 2017 and 2025, Julia Hechanova generated offsets, scale lines, and construction detail drawings shown in this book. Richard B Cooper compiled historical data. This information wass created for and is available through the Library of Congress at **loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/**.

This snapshot of our traditional fleet was made possible by a grant from the Dolphin Swimming & Rowing Foundation. Special thanks to Jon Bielinski, Daniel Daniloff, Nancy Friedman, Susanne Friedrich, Julia Hechanova, John Hornor, John Ingle, Morgan Kulla, Lolly Lewis, Diane Walton, and all who contributed their time and expertise.



COVER + BACK COVER IMAGE | SUSANNE FRIEDRICH